

VZCZCXRO7567
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #3028/01 2641426
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
P 201426Z SEP 08
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9507
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 003028

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/20/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PRT SALAH AD DIN: AD-DUJAYL CITY COUNCIL
CRITICIZES GOI AND PROVINCIAL RESPONSE TO 12 SEPTEMBER
BOMBING ATTACK

REF: BAGHDAD 2987

Classified By: PRT Team Leader R. Bell, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is a PRT Salah ad Din reporting cable.

Summary

[1](#)2. (S) The September 16 Ad Dujayl City Council criticized GOI and provincial responses to the September 12 car bombing (reftel). The Council thanked Coalition Forces (CF) for their quick response and support, complained about uncoordinated emergency response from the Iraqi Army (IA) and Iraqi Police (IP), and inadequate hospital facilities for crisis care. Council members also criticized insufficient support from GOI and provincial authorities in the aftermath of the attack, despite the governor's September 14 visit to Ad Dujayl and distribution of personal compensation to the victims. The council members said the incident highlights the need for increased vigilance, better resources, and training for the city's emergency responders. Although presumed to be an attack by AQI, the proximity of the attack to offices of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan's (PUK) has spurred speculation of an anti-Kurd effort by militant Jaysh al Mahdi (JAM) or Shia criminal groups. Residents of the city remain cautious following the attack. End Summary.

Emergency Responders Lack Resources and Training

[1](#)3. (SBU) In a September 16 meeting of the Ad Dujayl City Council, Council Chairman Bahir Banda thanked CF for their response and willingness to assist and said they will never forget how quickly CF reacted. Bahir said the main lesson learned from the incident is that the city of Ad Dujayl "can never be careless again." The Council said the bombing highlighted the need for a hospital in the city, because victims had to be rushed great distances to receive critical care; five victims died from massive bleeding during transport. According to the Chairman, the city's two ambulances were not enough, and he was forced to transport wounded to the hospital in his own car. At the hospital in Balad, people were turned away or given only bandages and no stitches, even though they had deep wounds. Witnesses also reported that it appeared nurses were not trained to handle such cases at the clinics or hospital.

[1](#)4. (SBU) District Director of Health Dr. Mohammed claims to have been one of the first responders on site, followed by Bahir and other Council members. All claimed to have responded on their own initiative after hearing the blast, without being contacted by the Iraqi Police (IP). According to the Council members, the incident highlighted the inability of IP/Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to respond efficiently to emergencies; the ISF were confused and the IP's response was "zero". Coordination among IP, fire department, and other first responders was non-existent and city residents are demanding the immediate firing of all IP

and ISF leaders for their failure to prevent the attack or respond appropriately.

SaD Authorities Reaching Out to Ad Dujayl Community

¶5. (SBU) The Salah ad Din Governor visited Dujayl September 14 along with members of the Provincial Council. He expressed his sympathies and support for the affected families, and told the local officials he would assist in every way possible. The Governor brought 33 envelopes containing 100,000 Iraqi Dinars (IQD) each for each family who suffered a loss. The Provincial Council brought 35 envelopes with 1,000,000 IQD in each, which they gave to Mayor Mohammed Hassan and Chairman Bahir to distribute. The District Council said the PC money for victims was insufficient to meet their needs. (100,000 IQD is equivalent to about 85 USD per person). The GOI has not offered any compensation thus far, although the Dujayl Council was told that after an assessment of the damages, funds may be available.

Ongoing Security Concerns

¶6. (SBU) The Council said the attack was surprising given security in Ad Dujayl had been adequate, although there has been some insurgent activity in the western part of the district. A local daily newspaper recently "reported concerns about security in an area known as Sayed Ghareeb." A few days earlier, the District Council had discussed the issue of security and the need to be vigilant in the area.

BAGHDAD 00003028 002 OF 002

On the 3rd and the 10th days of Ramadan, the Provincial Director of Police (PDOP) visited the district and advised the local chief of police to take increased security measures during Ramadan. The PDOP also warned that there were terrorists in the area who were seeking revenge because many residents of Ad Dujayl had testified against Saddam Hussein during the 2006 trial, which led to his conviction and execution.

Reasons Behind the Attack Unclear

¶7. (SBU) The attack occurred near the building housing the political party Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), although no PUK members were hurt in the attack. While the common assumption is that it was the work of AQI, CF have not ruled out the possibility that it was aimed at the PUK by a militant JAM or other Shia criminal groups, in response to escalating tensions between Kurdish peshmerga and the GOI in Diyala Province. According to Chairman Bahir, however, the purpose was to kill innocent civilians and to stir fear in the population. The high casualty count has made local store owners uneasy and uncertain about going back to work. The District Council called for a three-day period of mourning to conclude on Tuesday September 16.

CF Response to the Ad Dujayl Bombing

¶8. (S) According to CF intelligence shared with the PRT, the VBIED was most likely associated with AQI cells that operate in the Ad Dujayl area, and this attack appears to be part of a larger, Iraq-wide strategy by AQI to increase spectacular attacks during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Ad Dujayl JCC reported that two males between the ages of 18 and 22 reportedly dropped the vehicle off and fled the area, which indicates this was not a suicide attack. The VBIED detonated roughly five minutes before the end of the day's fast, at a peak time for the population to celebrate the day's ending.
CROCKER